

THE
S C A L E:
OR;
WOMAN weighed with MAN.
A
P O E M.
In Five C A N T O S.

By J. *Monterief*

-----Am I yourself,
But as it were in Sort and Limitation ;
To keep with you at Meals, comfort your Bed,
And talk to you sometimes? -----

-----If it be no more ;
Portia is Brutus' Harlot, not his Wife.

SHAKESPEAR.

L O N D O N :
Printed for D. WILSON and T. DURHAM, at Plato's Head, near
Round-Court, in the Strand.
MDCCLIII.

THE

SCABER

OF

Woman weighed with Man.

A

POEM

In Five CANTOS

By J. M. KENNEDY

But as it were in debt and obligation
To keep with you as guests, compare your debt
And mine to your obligation

SHAKESPEARE.

LONDON:

Printed by D. Wilson and J. Bennett, at the Press of the
University of Cambridge, in the Strand.

1860

THE
SCALE:
OR,
WOMAN weighed with MAN.

CANTO I.

A R G U M E N T.

The Subject; and the Author's Aim. Inscription of the Scale. Reputation for Sense the principal Pride of Men. Their mutual Complaisance on that Head. Women ranked by them in a lower Class. Satire misapplied to flatter this absurd Vanity. Juvenal censured. The great Multitude of his shallow Mimics. Reflections on Mr. Pope and Dr. Swift. The Introduction concluded with an Appeal from Prejudice and Vanity to Reason and Experience. Virtue the common Task of both Sexes. That in the Knowledge and Practice of Virtue true Sense and true Wisdom consist. Which perform their Duty best in general. The Subject of Love, &c. reserved for a Second Canto. Social Merit. Women more eminent for a Principle of Generosity: for Humanity, Compassion, and the Domestic Offices of Life: for Piety: for Public Spirit. The Conclusion.



THE
SCALE, &c.
CANTO I.

BEGIN, my Muse, with bold unborrow'd Praise,
Let us the Sense and Worth of Woman raise :
To their true Standard raise them, if we can ;
And shame the proud aspiring Creature, Man :
That henceforth he may curb his rash Disdain ; 5
Nor build Prerogative on Titles vain.

Princess, to You, by Providence's Care,
The Royal Pattern of the British Fair ;
Whose Wisdom soars above your Rank, whose Worth
Exceeds your high Pre-eminence of Birth ; 10
(From him deriv'd, whose Patronage and Sword
Religion's amiable Truth restor'd ;

Who gain'd this darling Purpose of his Life,
 But nobly lost Dominions in the Strife).
 To You whose Virtues, in their bright Excess, 15
 Ev'n Foes to George and Liberty confess;
 A Muse, ambitious of an honest Fame,
 Inscribes the new, the long-neglected Theme:
 Well-pleas'd the Strain of her Address to see
 From just Reproach of Adulation free. 20
 She but re-echoes, in her guiltless Lays,
 The Nation's Sentiments; a People's Praise.---

For Wisdom's Shadow, not for Virtue's Prize,
 Vain Man absurdly with his Neighbour vies.
 To be deem'd honest, void of Guile and Art, 25
 Is but his second humbler Pride of Heart.
 The Brand of Fool, so the wild Passion runs,
 He more than that of Villain fears and shuns.
 Sick of a gaudy Disposition; hence
 High, Low; Rich, Poor; all claim the Title, Sense. 30

This great Preliminary Claim confess;
 They meet, like Kings, and compromise the rest.
 Man will to Man a Sort of Homage do;
 Both wise, but one the wiser of the two:
 For both, so nicely pois'd Pretensions are, 35
 Of Sense inherit a sufficient Share.

On

On their own Excellence this Vote they pass ;
But rank the Women in a lower Class.
Thus each He-Fool, whom such vain Maxims guide,
Sees a whole Sex beneath him, in his Pride. 40

Not to reform, rather to flatter Men,
Foul Satire seizes her malignant Pen.
A grateful Victim to the vicious Heart,
Worth feels the Sting of her abusive Art :
While chiefly Woman, helpless Woman bleeds. 45
On her each rhiming Moth of Scandal feeds ;
And, sure his shallow Reader's Taste to hit,
Exhausts on her the Pittance of his Wit.

Rome's Satirist, the foremost of the Band,
Who paints fair Virtue with a Master's Hand, 50
But brutal Lust indelicately draws,
Leads up the Van in this ungen'rous Cause ;
Attacks alike the Living and the Dead,
And withers half the Laurels on his Head.

A thousand Mimics, with a borrow'd Grin, 55
With Wit not their's, on the same Subject sin :
But these, scarce knowing how to rhyme or rail,
Disgrac'd, in their unmanly Purpose fail.

Shame to themselves their pilfer'd Satires bring :
 Their harmless Scandal is without a Sting : 60
 Be therefore they, the lowest of their Kind,
 Too low for Notice, in Oblivion join'd.

Which should to Woman do the wittier Wrong,
 Of late two Giant Writers labour'd long.
 Friends, from the low Disease of Envy clear, 65
 They charm'd, with rival Wit, the Public Ear.
 One to the Summit of Parnassus rose:
 The second stoop'd, and sweep'd the Prize of Prose.
 With Fame, with such a Wealth of Genius blest;
 By no just Cause, no seemly Motive prest; 70
 Why should (alas!) the celebrated Pair,
 Uninjur'd, rashly satirize the Fair?

Thee chiefly, great among the greatest Names,
 Immortal Bard, my Muse reluctant blames :
 Thee skill'd the sparkling Gem of Worth to raise, 75
 And bid it glow with Elegance of Praise.
 Was it for thee, to Virtue's Friends a Friend,
 From Virtue's Side her Votaries to rend?
 In thee, Man's Friend, was it a seemly Drift
 To vie with such a Misanthrope as S---ft; 80
 Whose Satire oft Spleen, Party-Zeal, Caprice
 Spirit with Venom, and devote to Vice?

No.

No. Thine the chaste, thine was the moral Page ;
Inspir'd to mend or shame a vicious Age.

In either Sex true Worth, by Satire wrong'd, 85
To such a noble Advocate belong'd.
That Muse which Women of their Right bereaves,
Which scarcely Room for Female Virtue leaves ;
That Muse which draws them changeful as the Wind,
Which rainbows on a Cloud their fickle Mind : 90
Had she been zealous to defend their Cause ;
She more had merited the World's Applause.

To rouse and aggravate the Pride of Men,
Alas! what needed Satire's partial Pen ?
Women too much already we despis'd ; 95
Too much our native Privileges priz'd.
No longer let unequal Weights prevail.
Come, let us poise Pretensions in the Scale.---

Nature, supremely wise in her Designs,
To both their proper Provinces assigns : 100
Virtue their common Task, their End, their Good,
But Virtue vary'd to their Sex's Mood :
So vary'd as the Rules of Life require ;
Plain Rules which Heav'n and Reason's Light inspire.

Reason's

Reason's great Excellence, her highest Art 105
 Appears in fashioning the Moral Heart :
 In clearly teaching human Minds to know
 What they to God, themselves, their Neighbour owe ;
 How to discern, with Penetration nice,
 The Boundaries and first Degrees of Vice. 110
 True Sense in such high Knowledge chiefly lies ;
 And sure to practise it is to be wise.

Which of the two perform their Duty best ?
 If that be made the Touch-Stone and the Test ;
 To Life, my Muse, to common Life refer, 115
 For this plain Truth, That fewer Women err ;
 Still fewer to the Pitch of Man offend.
 Their Vices curbed, in certain Limits end.
 We, boldly bad, despise the Checks of Blame ;
 While Woman sins with the Restraint of Shame. 120
 More rooted in her Heart, by Maxims right,
 Reluctant Virtue seldom leaves her quite :
 Except when Ravagers, the Sons of Lust,
 Have laid her Virgin Honour in the Dust.

Pure Love to paint, high Source of human Bliss, 125
 To paint the Passion in its wild Excess ;
 Of either Sex, when Love or Lust prevails,
 To weigh the Merit in contending Scales ;

Might,

Might, as a Part confider'd, seem too long :
Be therefore this, in copious Matter strong,
Singly the Theme of a succeeding Song. } 130

Say, Muse, in social Merit which excells ?----
With Woman chief the Charm of Bounty dwells.
To Worth a zealous Patron, in her Heart,
She does, or would the Recompence impart : 135
But, Virtue, mourn ; and, high Pretensions, fall ;
For Woman's Power to recompense is small.
By partial Law, the lordly Makers hold
Undue Proportions of their much-lov'd Gold.
Of this, their Idol, if you would partake, 140
Mean Courtship to some guilty Passion make.
Serve that ; their Pimp, their Parasite, their Tool ;
Their Wisdom's, any Thing but Virtue's, Fool.
Misers to Worth, not unobserv'd but clear ;
On Vice they lavish Thousands by the Year. 145

Wouldst thou grow wealthy ; to Distinction rise ?
Call the Knave honest ; call the Blockhead wise :
To Dunces Wit, give Freedom to the Slave ;
And flatter Cowards with the Title, Brave.
Extol, this Maxim will avail thee most, 150
The vain Man's Head at ev'ry Rival's Cost.

More sensible the Fair of human Woe,
 Lend sweet Attention to the Tears that flow.
 Touch'd with the Mourner's Misery, they grieve ;
 Prone, while they weep and listen, to relieve. 155
 Unfeeling Man assumes the Face of Art :
 His Grief is often but an Actor's Part.
 All thine, O Woman, is the bleeding Heart.

A Crowd of Virtues hence, as from their Root,
 Fair to the Sight, like lovely Roses, shoot : 160
 Virtues which harmonize the Frame within ;
 And purge the Passions from the Dross of Sin:
 For all domestic Offices of Life
 Which qualify the Mother, Daughter, Wife.
 Where this high Principle of Goodness fails, 165
 Plain Vice or mask'd Hypocrisy prevails.
 Without Humanity ; the specious Strain,
 The Garb of Heroes, and of Saints, is vain.

Come, Piety, thou Queen of Virtues ; here,
 Attended by thy Sister Truth, appear : 170
 Of foolish wicked Man the Jest and Scorn,
 Come, and thy female Votaries adorn.
 Justice, their Stamp of Character to raise,
 Adds here the fairest brightest Beam of Praise.

At

At Heav'n's high Providence we laugh or fret: 175
But wiser Woman fears her Maker yet.

Where most, where least does Love of Country fail?
Place, ponder Public Spirit in the Scale.
In former Ages this was Britain's Boast.
Millions of Lives in the great Cause were lost. 180
By this her Heroes and her Patriots led,
On War's grim Theatre, on Scaffolds bled.
Zealous and panting for their Country's Bliss,
Her Hambdens, Sidneys, Russels bled for this.
All else, as the Majestic Cause drew near, 185
Did worthless to the Great and Good appear:
While yet vile Luxury was little known;
Nor viler Avarice did Britons own.

Pelf, Pleasure of their vicious Sons the Task!
Boldly we worship Gold without a Mask. 199
Gain is the Point, the Principle profest.
Now Public Spirit grows a Public Jest.
Posterity! (We laugh, we reason thus)
What has Posterity to do with us?
Just for our Time the gasping Nation save: 195
'Tis all we modern, mole-ey'd Mortals crave.

While, Woman, here thy Virtue blazes forth ;
It crowns thy Triumph in the Scale of Worth.
By Man this Subject wantonly profan'd,
Has ever sacred in thy Thoughts remain'd. 200
On such plain Points, where human Sense begins,
No Female Wit, no She-Blasphemer sins.
Man's is the Profanation ; his the Crime,
Unknown, unblush'd for, in our Father's Time.

Ye Fair, your Wisdom and your Charms exert, 205
To mend and moralize the smitten Heart.
Before you listen to the Tales of Love ;
Our Passion first, and Principles improve.
But chief, O chiefly let the Mother's Tongue
With early Love of Country taint her Young ; 210
Sow soon, deep sow the Seeds of future Fame ;
And teach ev'n Babes to lisp Britannia's Name.



THE
S C A L E:

O R,

W O M A N weighed with M A N.

C A N T O II.

A R G U M E N T.

An Introductory Dialogue between a Critic and the Author. Seducers of Women satirized. Their deceitful and barbarous Proceedings laid open. How fatal the Consequences are to the Seduced; and what an iniquitous Sentence is passed upon them. Who the chief Seducers. The Gratification of their Lust a sort of Human Sacrifice. Their frothy Defence and Reasonings exposed. Honour, their boasted Rule of Action, explained and defined. What Women Honour skreens; and whom it marks for Destruction. The base Deceit and Frauds which Honour warrants Mortal Resentment against Friends who violate the Marriage-Bed; on what grounded: the Consequence. A Supposition in Favour of Honour; and a fair Inference from that Supposition: Men of Honour being the Judges. The whole Comparison in this Article briefly stated; and a Decision given.---Love the Subject. Described, as dictated by Nature, and governed by Reason and Virtue. What the Test of Love; and why few Men fit to bear the Trial. How the false Passion operates in Men before and after Marriage. Effects which their Change of Behaviour naturally produces. Esteem the sole Preservative of Love. An important Caution to Men on this Head. Female Love more influenced by real or seeming Merit; more constant and more generous: why Romantic in some Degree. The servile Art and the Mercenary Views of Men branded. Another capital Decision in Favour of Women. By Way of Conclusion, the Dialogue resumed between the Author and the Critic.



THE
SCA L E, &c.

C A N T O II.

“ ALL this and more they will object. Forbear.
“ **A** In Time becaution’d by your Friends to fear.”---
Fear whom? Fear what? No; bid me rather
hope.---

“ Have you not censur’d Swift; and censur’d Pope?”---
As Wits, both are the Subject of my Praise. 5
My Muse between the two divides the Bays.---

“ But then she wounds them in a dearer Part;
“ Their moral Character; their hidden Heart.”---
Not Pope. Him (mark the Censure in it’s Place)
She scarcely could with higher Titles grace.--- 10

“ On both allow the Censure to be fair;
“ Why shock their fond Admirers? Have a Care:
“ High stands, all Envy dumb, their present Fame.”---
I must, I will, where Reason bids me, blame.---

“ The

" The Muse, the Mistress, or the Friend we love, } 15
 " Who censure fairly, still our Anger move. }
 " Ev'n candid L-----n may not approve." }
 To such as him I could, with honest Zeal,
 For the whole Justice of my Cause appeal.
 'Mong those for a dishonour'd Sex who plead, 20
 See L-----n the Van of Virtue lead.
 Of Female Worth, the Bliss which Women bring,
 How sweetly does the plaintive Heroe sing:
 While o'er an Angel's, a Clarissa's Urn
 His Heart and all th' assembled Muses mourn? 25
 A L-----n, ye Fair, is seldom found:
 But artful wicked Lovelaces abound.

Rise, Satire ; with indignant Pencil, draw
 Those Ravagers who 'scape the Scourge of Law :
 Who, Siren-like, invade the Virgin's Breast ; 30
 Keen to devour her Innocence and Rest.
 Amidst their Vows, their Adulation, Lies,
 Unmask the Traytors to the Fair-one's Eyes.

As soon as Beauty's early Blossom blows ;
 While yet the Mind nor Fraud nor Falshood knows ; 35
 By Snares, which scarcely wiser Women shun,
 The Novice falls ; by specious Snares undone.

In

In artful Guise, a Crowd of Foes appear,
Who buzz Esteem and Passion in her Ear.
Virtue's vain Title, Honour's-boasted Name, 40
They make the Mask and Vehicle of Shame;
Highly respectful in their Love, 'till Art
Gives full Possession of the Fair-one's Heart:
But then, no longer lowly Vassals, they
Seem metamorphos'd into Beasts of Prey. 45
Uncheck'd by Pity, conscious of their Pow'r,
Like Wolves, they watch the first unguarded Hour;
Spring to their Game, remorseless in their Haste;
And lay the sacred Fold of Virtue waste.

From that dire Moment Hell and Horrour rise: 50
Peace from her violated Mansion flies.
Hourly with Sighs the troubled Bosom heaves;
Which Hope, Life's latest Consolation leaves.
Succeeds, in chearful Innocence's room,
An everlasting, a remorseful Gloom. 55
Of Honour, in her conscious Mind, bereft;
Without a Friend, to save or pity, left;
Ev'n by the Robber of her Peace and Fame,
Left soon to Poverty, Derision, Shame;
Oblig'd to prostitute herself for Hire, 60
The Sport of Drunkards and of lewd Desire:

What

What can the poor deserted Sinner do ?
 Lost by Degrees, all Worth forsakes her too.
 Perhaps, to make the Tragic Scene compleat,
 Herself is doom'd to perish in the Street.

65

Be still, rash Censure, shall the Pride of Man
 Presume the Depths of Providence to scan ?
 Howe'er by purblind Mortals understood ;
 These are, ev'n where unfathomable, good.
 Yet sure th' unequal Lot of Woman here,
 Compar'd to lordly Man's, may seem severe.
 What scarce a Trespas is allow'd in him,
 In her is deem'd a Death-deserving Crime ;
 A Stain, a Wound, so mortal and impure,
 No Tears can wash it, no Repentance cure :
 Harsh Sentence on the fair Offender past,
 By sinful Man : and therefore not the last.
 'Tis well for her, since not on Earth forgiven ;
 The Scale of Man is not the Scale of Heaven.

70

75

Young Men, to you, the Robbers of the Fair,
 Who make their Ruin your Delight and Care ;
 Who first beat down their Virtue to the Ground,
 And whisper next the shameful Triumph round ;
 Whom Reason's Voice has long reprov'd in vain :
 Satire to you directs her angry Strain.

85

Gross

Gross vicious Sense and Habits unrefin'd
Mar ev'ry noble Function of the Mind.
You see perhaps, but will not feel the Force,
The Charms of Virtue's amiable Course:
Else, for a momentary guilty Gust, 90
For a loose Rapture of unbridled Lust;
You would not cancel Nature's sacred Ties;
Nor joy, like Fiends, in human Sacrifice.

When strongly push'd ; to parry Reason's Stroke,
One utters, in his own Defence, a Joke. 95
A second loudly laughs, as in a Fit :
Another answers with a Flash of Wit.
Some few perhaps, more void of Shame, pretend
That thus they chiefly compass Nature's End ;
Nature which here imposes no Restraint ; 100
Nor rates by this the Sinner and the Saint.
A Woman's free Compliance, Will, Desire,
Are all, they say, which Nature's Rules require.

What Will ?----Young, open, with an honest Heart,
She falls a Prey to the Seducer's Art ; 105
To Shews of Honour, which deceitful prove ;
To Rakes, to Sharpers at the Game of Love.
Is this the fair Compliance, Will, Desire,
Which Nature, Justice, Equity require ?

Learn, weak and wilful Foes to Reason, hence 110
 How wild a War ye wage with common Sense :
 In that distracted Situation place
 Some near Relation.---Frame a milder Case,
 If this seem shocking ; and suppose that, still
 She safe, the Man has only sinn'd in Will. 115
 " Ruin my Sister ! Stab my Daughter's Fame !
 " Mark them for Harlots with the Brand of Shame !
 " Out, angry Sword ; avenging Weapons, rise :
 " He, who but offers such Dishonour, dies."---
 Whence these new Sentiments, this high-flown Wrath ;
 This loud Denial of your former Faith ? 121
 Would not your conscious Heart at once rejoin,
 " The Case is alter'd ; for the Case is mine ?"---
 By partial Self such the Distinctions thrown
 'Twixt other Men's Pretensions and our own. 125

Instead of Virtue, long cashier'd and lost,
 Another Guide, Honour's strict Rule, you boast.
 Say, what is Honour ? Let it be defin'd.
 A Farce, a Mixture of a motley Kind :
 Part Vice, Part Virtue ; Gothic in it's Frame ;
 Proceeding half from Pride and half from Shame :
 A Monster foul within and fair without ;
 An Angel upwards, with a cloven Foot.

To

To give a Definition more concise;

Honour is Virtue reconcil'd to Vice.

135

Chiefly from rampant guileful Honour's Snare
The Rules and Roof of Friendship skreen the Fair.

Young Virgins too, for high Descent esteem'd,

Are sacred and inviolable deem'd.

In either Case who Crimes of Love commit,

140

Must strait the fashionable Title quit.

Here Honour's Laws with Reason's Rule agree:

But then all other lewd Attempts are free;

Wives, Sisters, Daughters, a promiscuous Game,

Presum'd fair Objects of a guilty Flame.

145

Not less the Means are than the Purpose foul;

Fraud and Deceit, a Masquerade of Soul.

Candour and Truth, the lovely Twins, retire;

Far banish'd from these Scenes of loose Desire.

Who Vows indeed, who strict Engagements break,

150

Are tax'd with high Dishonour: Fools! to make

A needless Waste of Promises precise;

Where unprov'd the whole Behaviour lies:

Where Frauds in Action, spight of Common Sense,

The Giant Honour titles fair at once.

155

Enrag'd,

Enrag'd, why does your Friend, with boist'rous Strain,
 When violated in his Wife, complain;
 But that high Wrong is done, dire Mischief wrought,
 Beyond Forgiveness in his Scale of Thought?
 To wrong a Friend, Foe, Stranger, whom you please;
 Is but one Crime, which differs in Degrees: 161
 And Crimes, the gloomy Subject of Remorse,
 Have only this Distinction, bad or worse.

Ev'n if the Sin consisted less in Lust,
 Than in the Breach of Friendship and of Trust; 165
 That Reason would alone suffice to prove
 A more unworthy Breach of Trust in Love.
 Conceiv'd a Man of Probity, not Art;
 As such admitted to the Fair-one's Heart;
 Strongly belov'd, confided in, esteem'd; 170
 Nay the Protector of her Honour deem'd:
 Who, thus intrusted, in an evil Hour,
 Half steals, half ravishes fair Virtue's Flow'r;
 Blasts her that loves him with a lewd Embrace,
 And robs her of her dearest Jewel, Peace: 175
 What Name, what Title is his proper Due?
 Silent my Pen :---say, Man of Honour, thou.

Thus, adverse in the Scales, here Worth appears,
 Rich but unripen'd by the School of Years;

There

There Lust, lurking beneath the Mask of Love ; 180
In Heart a Vultur, but in Form a Dove.
Weigh them ; the Tempters with the Tempted weigh ;
The Women prey'd-on with the Men of Prey,
(Of whom so long the List in either Class,
They might for almost half the Species pass) 185
Woman, the Dupe of Honour, suffers most :
But viler Man has little Cause to boast.
When fairly weigh'd ; in spite of Honour's Dream ;
His Scale is lighter, and will kick the Beam.

Love next my nobler Theme. Explain it Muse: 190
Rescue great Nature from a long Abuse.
Off with the Mask of Ages. Let us see
The Passion in it's primitive Degree:
Nor lost in Clouds, nor crawling in the Dust ;
Nor mix'd with mad Idolatry nor Lust. 195
Describe Affection where Esteem presides ;
Which Reason dictates, and which Virtue guides.

Such who by Nature's wise Prescription love,
Whose Flame their Heads as well as Hearts approve ;
Such only this high Principle inspires 200
With strong indeed, but elegant Desires :
For Love is Friendship of an upper Cast ;
Like Metal ripen'd into Gold at last.

In

In less Esteem, who reasons thus, repute
 The grosser Appetites, the Bliss of Brutes. 205
 His highest Nuptial Happiness he finds
 Plac'd in the nobler Intercourse of Minds.
 From thence that generous Affection flows,
 Which in the duly smitten Bosom glows :
 Which never from the much-lov'd Object errs ; 210
 But this to Self, with comely Zeal, prefers.

Who, madly with the Fire of Beauty smit,
 The Force of Wisdom, or the Charms of Wit,
 Eyes his own Pleasure, in his am'rous Mood ;
 Nor chiefly rates the Fair-one's Fame and Good ; 215
 Courting on any Terms his Passion's Ease :
 Not Love, the Rage of Lust is his Disease.
 This the great Witness ; this the Lover's Test,
 By which to prove the Passion in his Breast.

Few Men, if Men would speak with Candour here,
 Could well the strict Examination bear. 221

They wisely to conceal their inward State,
 Of pure disinterested Passion prate.
 Themselves may sometimes think it no Disguise ;
 Deceiv'd : for rank Possession is the Prize, } 225
 On which they fix, with steady View, their Eyes.

Angelic

Angelic Extasies, Flames, Darts, Racks, Wheels
(Whims which a hurt Imagination feels)
All end in this: and hence we plainly find
Why Love a Riddle deem'd, and Cupid blind. 230

While raging Passion in the Bosom burns,
Madden'd with Joys and Jealousy by Turns;
While Flames and Fire in their full Force remain;
Before Possession cures the sighing Swain;
While Lust lies hid in Wonder and Esteem: 235
How pure his Wishes, his Pretensions seem!
His Lordly Pride of Sex humbles it's Crest:
Since greatly wise one Woman is confest.
"Thy Words, my Fair, are as thy Looks divine;
"And all Minerva's Epithets are thine. 240
"Me blest, if thou propitious prove! Since Heaven
"Has such a Phœnix to my Passion given,
"That this, for Life, must ever last the same;
"A perfect, pure and undiminish'd Flame."

So talks, and often so believes, in Truth, 245
The love-sick, green and unexperienc'd Youth.
His beardless Understanding, void of Art,
So talks in pure Simplicity of Heart.
Of such a Prelude, wild, romantic, vain,
The sure, the fatal Consequence is plain. 250

No sooner is the Magic Zone unloos'd
(Long-wish'd-for Bliss, to lawless Lust refus'd)
When hymen'd Virtue to the Lover bends;
Forthwith his Dream of Bliss Elysian ends.
Now rank Idolatry prevails no more : 255
For Fancy's gay Delirium is o'er.
She, whose least Frown did the pale Sigher awe;
Whose Will was Wisdom, and whose Word a Law;
No Goddesses now nor Angel deem'd, at best
Is, as a pretty prattling Fool, carest. 260
Let her once aim at Censure or Advice :
" I grant your Table and your Toilet nice.
" No Woman lives with a genteeler Air.
" Dress, Cards and Custards are the Sex's Care.
" Mere household Wisdom is the Task assign'd. 265
" This therefore, as your proper Province, mind :
" But, for all Points of higher Reason; these
" Are our Prerogative, if Women please."

Depriv'd, but not unconscious of her Claim;
Must she not feel such foul Contempt and Shame? 270
Feel and resent this sudden Breach of Vows?
While at her Feet perhaps a Stranger bows;
Marks the wild Scene of Conjugal Neglect;
And breaths his guilty Passion with Respect.

All

All other Hopes of lasting Love are vain : 275
 Esteem alone is Nature's triple Chain.
 Where this strong Fetter fails on either Side,
 Soon will unseemly Strife their Hearts divide.
 If Men had Prudence and a proper Fear,
 They would bestow their chief Attention here. 280
 Instead of checking, with injurious Bit,
 The Modest Sallies of a Woman's Wit;
 Their Task should be by Culture, proper Praise,
 Still more her Pride of Sentiment to raise :
 By Reasoning alone her Will to lead, 285
 And banish Trifles, from her Heart and Head.
 Who the Fair chuses, smit with Beauty's Charms,
 As a mere Play-thing for his longing Arms;
 Not as an amiable Friend for Life :
 He for an Harlot weds her, not a Wife. 290

Less sunk in Vice a Woman's Passion proves.
 She, with a purer Sense of Merit, loves.
 Worth, real or appearing such, her Aim :
 More steady, fix'd and generous her Flame.
 What of Romance, exceeding Nature's Bounds, 295
 Taints her young Years, she builds on specious Grounds.
 Sincere herself, with credulous Esteem,
 Fondly she fancies Men are what they seem :

Thus, somewhat vain as well as grateful, grows
The Dupe of Incense and of idle Vows. 300
Hence high Conceptions of her Lover rise;
'Till she believes, exalted to the Skies
(Such the wild Force of Passion and of Whim)
Herself a Goddess, and an Angel him.
'Tis Men who, with intoxicating Speech, 305
With fervile Art, this giddy Lesson teach.

O sacred Truth, from whose untainted Source
Wisdom and Worth derive their Charms and Force;
How mean, how miserable is the Task,
Which toils to cover Nature with a Mask! 310
The Man, who thee from Love excluded first,
His own, and all succeeding Ages curst:
For thence a thousand dreadful Mischiefs flow;
Scenes of dire Discord and Domestic Woe.
Wedlock soon bids all mock Pretensions end: 315
But Scorn and Hatred in the Rear attend.

Shall Strains, which vile Hypocrisy reprove,
Not brand the mercenary Men of Love?
Men void of ev'ry Principle but Self,
And solely smitten with the Charms of Pelf: 320
Fortune's keen Hunters; an enormous Band,
Scatter'd, like hungry Locusts, o'er the Land.

Sense,

Sense, Beauty, Worth, with all the Graces crown'd,
 If Wealth is wanting, are an empty Sound.
 Not blush, ye reptile Worshippers of Gold, 325
 Who, young in Years, in hoary Vice are old!
 While your false Flames, dissembled Raptures rise;
 Not blush at your unmanly mean Disguise!
 Since, oft possessing a sufficient Store,
 On any Terms, you wildly covet more; 330
 Have it. Your abject infamous Regard
 Buys dear and richly merits the Reward.

Except where Parents, awfully severe,
 With their high Will, their Menace, interfere;
 Women, more duely delicate than us, 235
 But seldom prostitute the Passion thus.
 Less tainted with the sordid base Desire,
 They boast a stronger, boast a purer Fire;
 A better Claim to Truth and Virtue prove,
 And shame us with their honourable Love.--- 340

Here rests my Muse.---Say, Critic sage and nice;
 Once more say, what your Censure, your Advice?
 " I say the Subject, should the whole be true,
 " Must seem ill chosen, since the Writer you.
 " A Bard, high-thron'd upon the sacred Hill, 345
 " Has Leave to rage and bluster, if he will:

“ But for a Novice, for a Name unknown;
“ On him the Smile fits better than the Frown.
“ You should exalt, not humble haughty Man.
“ To please his Passions were a wiser Plan; 350
“ If you to gain his loud Applause aspire.”---
Yes, if I labour’d for the Sake of Hire.---
“ Since Profit you despise, consider Fame.”---
Mine is, or should be, Sir, a nobler Aim.---
“ Prithee, what Aim?” An injur’d Sex to right.--- 355
“ It makes me laugh. An injur’d Sex! Good-night.”---
Why laugh? Is this a Laugh-deserving View?---
“ An injur’d Sex! Adieu, my Friend; adieu.”



A. R. G. U. M. E. N. T.

THE
S C A L E:

O R,
W O M A N weighed with M A N.

C A N T O III.

A R G U M E N T.

Sense, and Woman's Claim to it, the Subject of this Canto. Wisdom almost too divine an Epithet for Human Nature. A Comparison in Wisdom waved. Common Sense the Subject in Dispute: defined; how rare a thing it is: not acquired without Labour and Study. That Common is the proper Epithet of Reason, not of Sense. Reason essential to Man, and Heaven's Witness in the Breast. Literal Common Sense the same with Conscience. Modesty the general Companion of solid Sense: inseparable from Wisdom: in Men a rare Quality: almost the Characteristic of Women. Pride of Understanding in Men the great Source of Error. In the Fair Sex Humility the Safeguard of Truth. A Tyrannical Disposition the chief Blemish of our Nature: descends to the Cottage. Reputation for Sense the great Bone of Contention. The shameful Oppression which Women suffer in this Respect; and the mean Wrong done to them by Witlings. Advice to the Ridiculers of Female Understanding. Their own Pretensions, to Knowledge of the World, Elegance of Taste, Wit and Humour; weighed. Vanity, the grand Foible of Man, rebuked in the Conclusion.



THE
SCALED, &c.

CANTO III.

WHILE, rous'd afresh, my keen advent'rous Muse
Her noble, her unpilfer'd Task pursues;
And, arm'd for Women, in a bold Defence,
Urges their long-disputed Claim to Sense:
Distinguish'd Portia, She, with modest Fear, 5
Courts thy propitious, courts thy vacant Ear.
To whom, as Sense the Subject of my Song,
Can this Address, to whom but thee belong?
For Sense extoll'd, ev'n by the Voice of Men,
O smile on Woman's Advocate, my Pen. 10
Should this, however zealous in the Cause,
With Strain not meriting thy wish'd Applause,
Perhaps sink far beneath the lofty Theme;
Be the Faults cover'd by the Writer's Aim.

Wisdom, much talk'd of, seldom met with here, 15
 Thy secret Residence, O Wisdom, where?
 Portia, say where (since who can better tell?)
 Where does the lovely Goddess deign to dwell?
 What Chains, what Charms her flying Footsteps hold?
 The Bond of Pleasure or the Blaze of Gold? 20
 Does Pow'r attract her? Can the Scepter'd Race,
 At Will, this Gem amidst their Jewels place?
 Her Price above the Diamond's Purchase soars;
 Above the Ruby's and the richest Ore's.
 Not all the pompous Sultans of the East, 25
 Wallowing in Wealth, shall bribe her for a Guest.
 Vain foolish Wantonness of human Pride,
 To dream that Wisdom can with Vice reside!
 From close-link'd Virtue never seen apart,
 Silent she sparkles in the spotless Heart. 30

High Wisdom, pure as her Æthereal Birth,
 But rarely sojourns with the Sons of Earth.
 To her the Scepter of the Skies is given:
 She reigns the Daughter and the Queen of Heaven.
 When she, to visit Mortals, Virtue's Friends, 35
 From Angels, from the Sons of God descends;
 Chiefly to Woman, their great Likeness here,
 The Seraph comes; her Votary to cheer.--

But hold, rash Hand ; the lifted Ballance wave.
 Thyself the faulty needful Labour save : 40
 For Wisdom is an Epithet divine ;
 Just Solomon's, and scarcely, Plato, thine.

That most uncommon Thing, call'd *Common Sense* ;
 Which all Men challenge, with a bold Pretence,
 And deem the Birth-right of their Sex and State ; 45
 Is here alone the Subject in Debate.

What art thou, *Common Sense* ? Thyself explain.
 O come, and let the Graces fill thy Train.
 My great Apollo thou, be thou my Guide.
 Except where Truth and Common Sense preside ; 50
 Parnassus, for the Dreams of Fancy fit,
 At best is but a Wilderness of Wit.

Reason's right Use is *Common Sense*. How few
 This Task of Nature with Attention view.
 Foes to stern Study, Men at random think. 55
 They nod and swallow Notions, while they wink.
 Crude unexamin'd Follies fill their Heads.
 Here idle Wit, there Superstition leads.
 Example most, many mere Whim directs.
 Alas ! Who fairly reasons ? Who reflects ? 60

This Plant of Common Sense, so rarely found,
Grows no where but in cultivated Ground.
Unless up-rooted by the Lab'rer's Toil,
Rank Weeds will over-run the richest Soil;
Nature's wild Moisture turn to barren Mud; 65
And Reason's Shoots be stifled in the Bud.---

Ev'n in low Crafts to gain a proper Skill,
Pains, Time and Teaching must attend the Will.
Void of these needful Aids, the Head and Hand
Are soon, both helpless, at an utter Stand. 70
Some few perhaps, more docile than the rest,
With a Sagacity, like Instinct, blest,
The Wheels of Art so suddenly discern;
They rather seem to recollect than learn.
But, where Things err from their establish'd Course, 75
Such rare Examples are of little Force.

Is Sense, the fairest noblest Art of Man,
His Judge of Nature and of Nature's Plan;
Which Truth and Falshood in the Ballance lays,
To form his Taste, Belief, Contempt and Praise : 80
Is that great Science to Perfection brought
Without the least Apprenticeship of Thought?
This scarcely Nature's Fools will speak aloud:
Yet such the plain Pretensions of the Crowd.

Fast

Fast as their crude Opinions spring to Light; 85
Hence comes their Title to suppose them right.

Instead of *Common Sense*, Title absurd,
Place *Common Reason* as the proper Word.
Of this indeed all human Minds partake.
It is the noble Essence of their Make;
Heav'n's Witness, in the Breast, of Right and Wrong,
Against the vile Blasphemer's idle Tongue.
With other Men we juggle in Discourse;
And boldly call the better Cause the worse:
But still, for Reason's Moral Voice is plain, 95
We labour to deceive ourselves in vain.

Reason or *Instinct*, call her what you will,
Conscience must needs her inward Task fulfill.
Knowledge and Sense, which keen Reflections bring,
Serve but to sharpen her untutor'd Sting. 100
This all, howe'er deny'd, must feel within,
Who grossly 'gainst the Light of Nature sin.
Yes, Heav'n, to leave us void of all Defence,
Endows us deeply with a Moral Sense.
If Truth and Meaning should attend the Name, 105
Then *Common Sense* and *Conscience* are the same.
But this Men boast not: rather they conceal
The Worm which they within their Bosom feel.

With

With solid Sense, as a Companion, join'd
 True Modesty we seldom fail to find: 110
 Chiefly, where Wisdom builds her fairest Seat,
 There the coy Goddess chuses her Retreat.
 Eager I quote, a glaring Proof to be,
 Thee, wise Athenian; Virtue's Martyr, thee.
 O sent of Heav'n; with merciful Intent, 115
 In Heathen Nature's purblind Reason sent
 To cure the gross Impediments of Sight,
 And pave the Way for a diviner Light:
 While Athens saw, but saw with jealous Eyes,
 Thy Wisdom far above Example rise; 120
 While this Greece own'd; by loud Conviction prest,
 While this ev'n Priests, in Oracles, confest:
 Alone, O lowly Sage, thy modest Mind
 Remain'd to such applauded Wisdom blind.
 " God only wise: to doubt the Part of Man, 125
 " Where certain Truth escapes his narrow Span.
 " Virtue's pure Precepts and himself to know,
 " Is his chief Knowledge and his Task below."
 Thy Words, as well thy great Disciples vouch,
 Thy firm Persuasion, Socrates, was such. 130
 In thee restrain'd, proud Science check'd her Flight;
 Nor sought to soar above her humble Height.

Since

Since Humbleness of Mind, with modest Gait,
Does on imperfect Human Wisdom wait;
In Men seen seldom; or, if seen, soon lost, 135
The lovely Badge adheres to Women most.
While we, with persecuting Zeal, contend
By Force the stubborn Faith of Souls to bend;
While Sword, Fire, Faggot, Instruments of Dread,
Strange Proofs, the Pride of our Opinions spread; 140
Less boastful of their Understandings, they
The Rule of Sense and Socrates obey.
We, Lords of Reason, as we fancy, born,
All Bars, all Limits of Discretion scorn.
Our Right to judge we plead by Nature's Bull, 145
And, like high Princes, put it forth at full.
Many, nay most, in some peculiar Things,
As Fancy leads them, are Despotic Kings.
Faith's mystic Points, the Bounds of Good and Ill
Are strait decided by their Sovereign Will. 150
To prove their Title equal to their Boast,
New, singular Opinions please them most;
Which, unexamined, oft espous'd by Chance,
They first perhaps, like Men in Sport, advance;
Next by Degrees, with growing Warmth, defend; 155
'Till, piqu'd, the Men of Wit in Biggots end,
Pride is the fruitful Source of Error. Thence,
In Sciences, Religion, Common Sense,
A thousand Whims of Heresy commence.

More

More from this fatal Root of Error free, 160
 Plain Woman loves with Nature's Eye to see.
 Her honest Understanding, unrefin'd,
 Sins not, thro' wilful Affectation blind ;
 Nor seeks a singular Mistake to find.
 If oft she from this golden Maxim errs, 165
 And Subtleties to simple Sense prefers ;
 She courts not there the Bubble of Applause.
 It is not Pride. Humility the Cause.
 Brow-beat, scar'd, over-aw'd a thousand Ways,
 To boist'rous Man the Compliment she pays. 170

With Frailties, Follies, Vices cover'd o'er,
 Weak as we are, and sick of ev'ry Sore ;
 In that low Pride, which loves to tyrannise,
 The first great Blemish of our Nature lies.
 Not only where, high-seated on the Throne, 175
 A Prince consults his lawless Will alone ;
 Nor yet where Wealth her lofty Forehead rears,
 There only Wantonness of Power appears.
 From Rank to Rank the flowing Vice descends ;
 Till the dry Channel in a Cottage ends. 180

By Pow'r above him gall'd, the Man of Might
 Makes his Resentment on the weaker light.

They

They next, provok'd and greedy to devour,
Bid the still weaker feel their Weight of Pow'r.
Thus each, by Turns oppressing or oppress'd, 185
Loses his own and breaks his Neighbour's Rest.
But chief in Sense the great Oppression lies :
For Power and Rank and Wealth are ever wise.
Would you buy Safety from the Man you fear ;
Fail not to pay your humble Homage here. 190
Court his high Judgment, imitate his Ways ;
And sooth him with the Tribute of your Praise :
Left rous'd to Wrath the Pride of Haman be ;
Then Woe to Worth that will not bow the Knee.---
If false the Charge, Shame is the Poet's Due : 195
Blush, Human Nature, if the Charge be true.

So low the Stations, small the Power of most ;
In them this Stream of Tyranny seems lost.
Scourg'd by proud Wealth, and govern'd by the Bit,
They seem alone to fawn in Fetters fit. 200
But to the lowly Cottage trace him ; still
You'll find the Slave a Monarch in his Will.
Oblig'd to bow the Neck where others come,
The little Tyrant will be wise at Home :
And there the weaker Vessel finds of Course, 205
His Scale of Wisdom is the Scale of Force.

Us'd more or less, in this Domestic Yoke,
 To hear her Reason treated as a Joke;
 To find her Claim to Common Sense not born;
 She meets elsewhere with a more humbling Scorn; 210
 Meets, ev'ry noble Effort to perplex,
 With the Derision of a Lordly Sex;
 Who strait, if Women ought but Trifles know,
 The Title Wisdom, with a Sneer, bestow;
 Nor blush to bid the Cheek of Beauty glow. } 215

Witlings, mean is your proud and partial Sneer.
 Not so the Signs of solid Sense appear.
 Esteem and Praise, where Sense and Nature guide,
 Men, fairly measur'd by the Scale, divide.
 Here rul'd by Shame, if not by Virtue's Voice, 220
 Sense, eagle-ey'd, perceives no room for Choice:
 Since Praise, if richly due to Men or Things,
 A sure Disgrace on the Refuser brings.
 But where the lucid Twins, Worth, Wisdom meet,
 These with their Favour rising Merit greet. 225
 While haggard Envy blasts, by scornful Ways,
 It's tender Buds; they cherish them with Praise;
 Afford a Shelter to the young and weak,
 And prompt the silent modest Tongue to speak.

Ye, whose high Ridicule falls on the Fair ; 230
 Who deem the Bud of Sense in Women rare :
 Put home the Question to yourselves, and see
 First the true Standard of your own Degree.
 Away with ev'ry self-deceiving Art :
 For once perform a wise and manly Part ; } 235
 Explore the barren Head and little Heart.
 The Muse, should difficult the Task appear,
 With her auxiliary Scale is near.

For Knowledge of the World and human Life
 You first contend, with bold ambitious Strife. 240
 Vain Fools! what know ye?---“ Men and Manners.”---

Men !

Say, who the best, and who the wisest then?---
 “ The best are Virtue's Friends.”---The wisest who?---
 “ In one Respect,---the Friends of Virtue too.”---
 With an ill Grace your forc'd Confessions fall: 245
 But, Triflers, know, this one Respect is all.
 While the mad dreaming Multitude, while you
 Strange Schemes, in Quest of Happiness, pursue;
 Like Novices, on human Life reflect,
 And Bliss from Vice and Vanities expect: 250
 Each skilful Judge of Truth and Nature flies
 From the gay Scenes where Death in Ambush lies.

The wise indeed of either Sex, the good,
 Temper'd by Virtue's amiable Mood,
 Are prone to be deceiv'd with specious Art. 255
 Plain is the Cause; their Innocence of Heart.
 Thus oft the subtle Hypocrite, the Knave,
 Arm'd with low Cunning, triumphs o'er the Brave.
 Abhorring all Suspicion, nobly blind,
 Women and Heroes, partial to their Kind, } 260
 The Villain late and with Reluctance find.

Now boast the Badges of a narrow Soul;
 Your sage Distrust and doubting Sense extoll.
 Nay boast the Buckler of a vicious Breast;
 Since this your Brother Knaves will baffle best. 265
 O Wretches, Aliens to the Sweets of Life,
 Jealous alike of Servant, Friend or Wife!
 On Earth if sacred Confidence must fail;
 If wild Suspicion and Distrust prevail;
 Men are already Fiends, or something worse: 270
 Not Hell could mark them with a greater Curse.

Who knows the World?---Say Politicians;---we.
 Our Province is the Land; and our's the Sea.
 That Boast, replies the Traveller, is vain.
 The Land we challenge, Mariners the Main.--- 275

A Youth, whose Cheek is cover'd still with Down,
Swears the first Knowledge is to know the Town.
With him the Brothel is the wisest School.
He laughs at Pedants and the College Fool.---
Wing'd by their Cups, the Sons of Bacchus soar; 280
Their Claim asserting with a Midnight Roar.
Bold Censors these on Men and Manners sit;
And gossip Scandal in the Guise of Wit.
But chief, to sooth their Vanity, their Gall,
Whole Hecatombs of injur'd Women fall. 285
Harsh Sentence there the maudlin Judges pass.
A Female bleeds at ev'ry foaming Glass.

Thus for a Shadow, for a founding Name,
We simply battle, with ambitious Claim.---
While thus our trifling Emulations glow; } 290
'Thine, Woman, is the nobler Aim; to know
Thyself, thy Station, and thy Task below. }

Man next for Elegance of Taste contends.
Just here Propriety begins; there ends.
That Face, Park, Palace, Picture pleases.---Why?
Nature, without a Rule, informs his Eye.
Of Books, Style, Sentiment, he judges too;
At least not worse than other Critics do.

If

If others lean upon the Staff of Art;
The more his Praise, who scorns a study'd Part. 300

Humour's fine Salt, the Seasoning of Wit,
Are Points much labour'd at, but seldom hit.
In these proud Man, conquer'd by Shame, will yield;
And slowly quit the long-disputed Field.
There Nature fails him, he will own for once: 305
But then she doubly makes it up in Sense.
Plain are his Hints, and his Expressions good:
He speaks to make his Meaning understood.---

Check, Satire, check thy loosely flowing Rage;
Nor with gross Censure stain the solemn Page. 310
In such a wild Extravagance of Boast,
The Dignity, the Pride of Man is lost.
Down, Parallel; nor let the Scale appear:
Spare, Muse; and, Women, cease your Triumph here.
Left Men too low for your Resentment sink; 315
At Vanity, their chief Degradation, wink,
On Faults which should your Indignation raise,
Compassion wasted is akin to Praise.
This, only this let silent Pity bear.
Blush, weep and wound us with the falling Tear.

F I N I S.

THE
S C A L E:

OR,

WOMAN weighed with MAN.

C A N T O IV.

A R G U M E N T.

A fresh Invocation. Manners the Subject of this Canto. The Inscription. Good-Nature the glorious Characteristic of both Sexes here; Virtues substitute, a Check to Vice. Women more eminent for their courteous Behaviour. This Superiority remarkable in the lowest, and still more conspicuous in the middle Rank of Life. Urbanity, first established in Courts and Cities, continues chiefly to prevail there: in the Country, despised by the male Sex; honoured and eagerly studied by the Women. The toward Disposition of the latter; and their amazing Progress in that Art. Not Music nor Poetry, but Women the first Civilizers of the World. By them Discord and Rapine checked; Society fashioned to Laws and Government, as well as to the Cultivation of Arts and Commerce; Courtesy begun and polished; Hospitality introduced. The Peasants in all Ages and Countries solely preserved from Barbarism by their Means. Woman in high Life, and the glorious Effects of her Urbanity described. The Prize adjudged in this great Article. Chastity of Conversation considered next: dwells with Women only. The strange Improprieties of Men: their lewd Jest; their profane Sallies of Wit; their gross and ill-timed Swearing; and the general Pedantry that prevails in their Discourse. Scandal weighed, and the Charge retorted on the Men. Last of all, a capital Point proved; that Women have a large Fund for elegant and proper Discourse, without the Help of Learning. An Exhortation grounded on this Subject, concludes the Canto.



THE
S C A L E, -

C A N T O IV.

AGAIN, my Muse, poise, with impartial Hand,
The broad capacious Ballance o'er the Land.
Our little World by Nature's Rule divide:
This is the Male and that the Female Side.
In adverse Scales, their full Pretensions weigh; 5
And now their MANNERS in the Ballance lay:
While ERUDITION waits to close the Scene.

Not here by MANNERS moral Worth we mean.
To shew where least the milder Virtues fail,
Was the whole Task of a preceding Scale. 10
Indeed if Virtue form the chief Pretence,
If Worth the first and fairest Claim to Sense;

Let Man, now ready to resign the Throne,
That Woman is the wiser Being own.

For civilized Deportment which excel ; 15

And where doth Dignity delight to dwell ?

Of this we speak. What Sex, in Manners, most

Can the rich Garb of comely Breeding boast ?

Much lighter here the Scale of Man we find.

It mounts, and vainly dangles in the Wind. 20

For Beauty, first among the Fairest plac'd ;

G----BY, with every great Distinction grac'd ;

Whose native Honours, from a princely Line,

Array'd in Virtue's nobler Ermine shine :

Propitious listen to the Muse's Voice ; 25

Smile on her Theme and dignify the Choice.

She for thy Sex, for injur'd Merit pleads ;

And would to Fame, where G----BY's Favour leads,

As Truth's and Virtue's Advocate, ascend ;

By Verse, deep-tinctur'd with the glorious End. 30

Among the genial Blessings Nature's Hand

Profusely sheds on this ungrateful Land,

A Disposition singularly good

Has long the foremost by Confession stood.

Fraud,

Canto 4. The S C A L E.

51

Fraud, Cruelty, like Aliens, grafted here, 35
Not as the Natives of our Soil appear ;
Candid, mild, merciful, from ancient Days,
Are deem'd the Climate's or the People's Praise.

GOOD-NATURE, amiable Gift of Heav'n,
Fly not, like Virtue, from our Confines driv'n. 40
O stay ; the Substitute of Virtue be ;
For Vice still finds a powerful Check in thee.
Thy sudden Voice arrests the Robber's Arm,
And saves the trembling Traveller from Harm.
By thee restrain'd, nor Poison taints our Meals ; 45
Nor the drawn Dagger to the Bosom steals.
Ev'n where grim Havock rages in the Field,
Oft BRITONS to thy gentler Dictates yield.

“ So Men, like Women, are good-natur'd ” ?---True
Their Birth-right this. Why rob them of their Due ? 50
Yes, Thanks to Climate and the Breath of Heaven,
Men here have Dispositions mildly given.
But for this Check, where Vice a Torrent grows,
And wildly, starting from its Channel, flows ;
Our Land, unable to resist the Flood, 45
Like GOLGOTHA, would be the Field of Blood.

To

To MAN (here witness his unfocial Air)
 Of Courtesy belongs the smaller Share.
 Long to the Stranger he forbidding proves ;
 Nay shy not seldom to the Friend he loves. 60

Vain of his Country's Name, on Aliens born
 He frowns, with an inhospitable Scorn.
 Our Island Haughtiness, the BRITISH Frown,
 Among the Nations is a Proverb grown. 64

Blush, blush, whom the reproachful Proverb stains.
 No Part to guiltless Women appertains :
 Them Sense from this unseemly Fault restrains. }

In humble Life view Men; the Rabble view;
 The rude are many, but the civil few.
 Where Sense, where civiliz'd Deportment fails, 70
 A rough Good-Nature, if you will, prevails.
 Be this the lawful Boast of BRITAIN'S Crowd ;
 Since ev'n by Foreigners and Foes allow'd.
 Yet sure while Women of the lowest Class
 Retain their Modesty, their Wall of Brags ;
 Compar'd in this, they would for Patterns pass. }
 Of MANNERS Modesty the Source appears ; 77
 MANNERS that suit our Station, Sex and Years.

Still stronger in the middle Rank we find
 This high Pre-eminence of Woman-kind. 80

While

Canto 4. The S C A L E.

53

While MEN, of endless Vice and Folly full,
Drawn divers, as their headlong Passions pull,
Themselves to please exert their utmost Pains;
Small Room for idle Courtesy remains.
Let Gold, let Grandeur glisten to their Hope, 85
Or let mad Pleasure be the Master-Scope;
Whate'er their ruling Appetite we call,
A clownish Self is uppermost in all.

Not so with WOMAN. From ambitious Strife,
From all the busy bustling Scenes of Life, 90
At a due Distance plac'd; her gentle Mind
Grows more and more by social Arts refin'd.
In calm domestic Offices and Ease,
She feels for others and she learns to please.
From Nature's Root spontaneous Pity grows; 95
But more from Art the pleasing Manner flows.
Where both meet Modesty; with mingled Arm,
The Sister-Graces form their triple Charm.

In Courts and Cities, not in rural Plains,
Her eldest Throne URBANITY retains. 100
Amidst her WOMEN there the graceful Queen
Is, deck'd in all her Pomp of Beauty, seen.
When she from Cities, from the Blaze of Courts
Retiring, in the flow'ry Meadow sports;

Or:

Or sits delighted in the shady Grove, 105
 And wings with Courtesy the Shafts of Love:
 The furlly Swain, except while CUPID'S Dart
 Sinks deep, and quivers in his wounded Heart;
 By Birth, by Choice, an Alien to her Sway,
 Will at her Shrine no vassal Homage pay. 110
 Not Love's sweet Bands can long the Peasant quell;
 Since HYMEN soon dissolves the magic Spell.
 Sick of Restraint the fated Husband grown
 Flies off, and hastens to resume the Clown. 114

Far otherwise dispos'd, the rural Fair
 Swift to the Goddess, in her Haunts, repair;
 Devour her Precepts, and assume her Air. }
 We flow-plac'd Years for such Improvements ask:
 By Nature prompted to the pleasing Task,
 They come, see, learn; and, such their docile Heart, 120
 At once grow polish'd in the School of Art.

O lovely WOMAN; form'd, by Wisdom's Plan,
 To mitigate the savage Creature, MAN;
 Nearer high Virtue's Path his Will to lead;
 To mend the Vices of his Heart and Head: 125
 Yoak'd with a Race in rustic Manners rear'd;
 There first thy native Excellence appear'd.

Not

Not ORPHEUS, by the Muse's fabled Fire;
Nor yet AMPHION, with his tuneful Lyre,
Had Force to civilize the rugged Swain. 130

Vain Music was and Poetry was vain.
What else but WOMAN was the pow'rful Cause,
Which fashion'd rude Society to Laws?
But she who bid the Rage of Rapine cease;
Or sooth'd the boist'rous Villagers to Peace? 135

While these, in Arms, frown'd adverse on the Green,
She the sweet Milk of Concord pour'd between.
'Twas she that in the Gaps of Kindred stood,
To plead the Bond of Nature and of Blood.

First join'd by Ties which female Charms compose, 140
Towns, Cities, Commonwealths and Kingdoms rose.
Strait new-born Arts appear'd, and Commerce mild,
On neighbour-Nations Wealth diffusing, smil'd.
Young COURTESY, with ling'ring Progress, grew;
'Till WOMAN wing'd her, and the Cherub flew. 145
By social WOMAN introduc'd, began
Fair Hospitality to visit Man;
Which long, for late a Resting-place was found,
Like NOAH'S Dove, had vainly hover'd round.

Still, as at first, the female Task remains 150
 To scatter Sense and Breeding in the Plains.
 Soon would, if wholly left to Nature free,
 Again the Villager a Savage be.
 Nor here alone, in this BOEOTIAN Clime,
 Would Barbarism grow the Peasant's Crime. 155
 ARCADIA's Shepherd, in the golden Age,
 Unsooth'd by WOMAN, would have learn'd to rage;
 Have oft for Lucre bid a Brother bleed,
 And for a Ponyard chang'd his tuneful Reed.
 There Love with gentle Thoughts the Swain inspir'd, 160
 Fond to resemble whom his Soul admir'd.
 Ev'n the rude CYCLOPS, when subdu'd by Love,
 With GALATHEA charm'd the list'ning Grove.
 Slack'ning their Course, the Winds attentive grew;
 Play'd round, and HYBLA gather'd as they flew 165
 (For HYBLA's Honey trickled from his Tongue)
 Then flew to ravish OCEAN with the Song.

From GALATEA, from the rural Fair,
 Hye, Muse, to Court, and visit WOMAN there.
 Whom Nature highly fitted for her Part, 170
 See polish'd by the skilful Hands of Art.
 Around her smile the Graces. In her Train
 Ease, Elegance and Dignity remain.

Rough

Rough MAN, with Wonder, while he gazes, shook,

Contracts a growing Gentleness of Look.

His Manners next assume a milder Cast.

The tardy Flow'r of Breeding comes at last.

Indeed where Love's sweet Magic melts the Soul,

More swift the Wheels of Reformation roul.

Thus CERES, with slow-rising Verdure crown'd, 180

Long, like a Sluggard, sleeps upon the Ground ;

Till, rous'd to feel the genial Heat begun,

She shoots and ripens in the Summer Sun.

Form'd in this School, by such Examples fir'd,

Men Breeding and a better Taste acquir'd. 185

Their very Virtues, not their Taste alone,

Advantag'd, with a brighter Lustre, shone :

And Sense, which rough as Nature's Diamond shew'd,

Now gayly, like the burnish'd Sparkler, glow'd.

Affected by the Progress of the Mind, 190

Speech grew, to match their Sentiments, refin'd ;

Grew for the Labour of the Muses fit,

For all the gay Varieties of Wit.

First flow'd in Courts the pure CASTALIAN Stream.

There first PARNASSUS fir'd the Poet's Dream : 195

While high-bred WOMAN in her Lover wrought

An Elegance of Language and of Thought.

To sing of Heav'n and Providence's Ways,
 Pious she bid him tune his firstling Lays :
 Herself the second Subject of his Praise.

Who the great Polisher of human Life, 201
 The Source of Breeding, and the Balm of Strife,
 Let wilful Ignorance refuse to see ;
 While here the Muse and Men of Sense agree.
 Fond to display their Common-place of Wit, 205
 Let Fools in Judgment on the Fair-one fit ;
 Pronounce her weaker than themselves, and place
 Her chief Perfection and her highest Grace
 Not in the Mind and Manners, but the Face.
 Smile, WOMAN, at their Impotence of Will ; 210
 For, Spight of Envy, thine the Triumph still :
 Since long the wisest of our Sex allow
 The Prize of sweet URBANITY to you.----

If not the same ; here, as a Sister Prize,
 Let chaste, let proper Conversation rise. 215
 Scarce to the blushing beardless School-boy known,
 This dwells with WOMAN, and is all her own.
 'Mongst us prevails the gross, the smutty Jest ;
 Or Sense obscene, in cleanly Language drest.

Lewd

Canto 4. The SCALE.

61

Lewd Wit is boldly bandy'd every where ; 220
 But chiefly wounds the Virgin's modest Ear.
 Deal not unfairly with the Ribbald, Muse ;
 Perhaps in Part he merits her Excuse.
 Despairing oft to match her in Debate,
 He wisely triumphs at a cheaper Rate. 225

From this high-relish'd Subject, once begun,
 Men, with an easy quick Transition, run.
 Religion next the ready Scoffers hit :
 At Heav'n they point their other half of Wit.
 He who debars them of that double Source, 230
 Will quickly tame these SAMPSONS in Discourse.
 Shorn of all Wit, their Tongues so valiant found,
 Like Captives grind, in brazen Fetters bound.

Are we still Heathens here ? Who reigns above ?
 The Christian GOD or a voluptuous JOVE ? 235
 Heedless of human Vice or human Worth,
 Is he the Subject of his Creature's Mirth ?
 Whence your Presumption, daring Mortals, say ;
 That rashly you with his high Titles play ?
 Say, whence, O long-accustom'd to blaspheme, 240
 Your Profanation of his hallow'd Name :
 A Name which Infidels are taught to fear ;
 Which the lewd Sons of MAHOMET revere ?

Because

Because when awful Thunder rends the Sky,
 And Bolts, wing'd with redoubled Flashes, fly; 245
 Nor you nor yours fall by the vengeful stroke
 Of Sulphur, wafted on the guiltless Oak :
 Do you for this, safe from the Thunderer's Fire,
 Invoke, with idle Merriment, his Ire ?---
 Father of Heaven, O Being solely good; 250
 Let Mercy, let the great Redeemer's Blood,
 That Blood so cheaply quoted in Discourse,
 Still plead, and save us from GOMORRAH'S Curse.

Whom no Temptation should induce to swear,
 Vain Man, why thus untempted sin ? Forbear. 255
 All other Vices have a Sort of Sense;
 Some human Motive for a fair Pretence :
 But what can Swearers plead in their Defence ?
 They seem, no Bait, no Bribe of Pleasure giv'n,
 Earth's Volunteers against the King of Heav'n. 260

If needs the dwarfish TITANS, in their Rage,
 Will madly with Omnipotence engage ;
 Yet why compel, heedless of Place and Time,
 WOMEN to witness their atrocious Crime ?
 Why sin, with rude Intemperance of Tongue, 265
 Ev'n in the sacred Presence of the Young ?

Canto 4. The S C A L E.

63

From all, but chiefly gross Blasphemers, you
The Muse a Reverence, with Ardour true,
Claims, to the rising Generation due.

}

Dwell I too long upon the Subject here? 270
Say, Critic, nibbling in thy narrow Sphere.
But, Worm of Envy, void of honest Zeal,
To thee why should a Stranger Muse appeal?
Vile Insect, go;---thou Sucker of a Name;
Whose chief Repast is the young Flow'r of Fame. 275
Of Swearers if the Number small appears;
If not Experience to your tingling Ears,
Reader, a thousand daily Proofs affords;
Blame, justly blame me for a Waste of Words.

Duely to paint the Scholar's high-flown Prate; 280
How Politicians buzz Affairs of State;
What these Men suffer, and what those perform;
The Soldier's Battle and the Seaman's Storm:
Duely the darling Topic to describe
Of Misers, of the Money-loving Tribe; 285
To paint the roaring Hunter's chief Discourse,
His Hounds, Hares, Foxes and his nimble Horse:
It would more than a hundred Tongues require;
An endless Subject for a Muse of Fire.

From

From all too plainly would this Truth appear ; 290
 That Men of ev'ry Sort are Pedants here.
 On the few Points, in which they most excel,
 Long lost to Shame, the tiresome Talkers dwell.

Happy the few whom Sense and Virtue lead
 In other Paths, far from low Vice, to tread ; 295
 Far from loud Riot, and the Din of Wit :
 For Youth, for WOMEN to converse with fit.
 Say, such ; when, sick of manly Froth and Fire,
 To FEMALE Conversation ye retire ;
 Where chaste Decorum reigns ; where, aw'd by Fear, 300
 No Violation shocks the modest Ear :
 Are ye not pleased ?---Let the vain Witling joke :
 Our Mirth he may, but not our Spleen provoke.

Come Laughter to the Test. Begin the Tale.
 Make haste and weigh thy Scandal in the Scale.---- 305
 " The well-known Tittle-tattle Gossips they.
 " Weigh theirs, not mine: true FEMALE SCANDAL weigh.
 " This, Poet, early from the Dawn of Time,
 " Has been, and ever will be WOMAN'S Crime.
 " Take Warning, cease the guilty to defend ;
 " And here your pompous Panegyric end."----

Yes,

Yes, many Women err.---“ Or all, or most
 “ May this high Sauce of Defamation boast.”---

What, all! Unconscionable Censor! All!
 Must a whole Sex, doom'd by thy Censure, fall? 315
 Nor MAN nor WOMAN errs to that Degree.
 Less criminal, weigh'd in the Balance, she.
 While HIS keen Arrow, dipp'd in Venom, flies;
 Levell'd, with mortal Meaning, at the wife;
 At the Fame levell'd of the great and good 320
 (For this the vile Calumniator's Food)
 HER Scandal, of a more innoxious kind,
 Is chief to female Weaknesses confin'd;
 To Faults of Person, Breeding, Taste or Dress.
 Easy the Motive of her Gall to guess. 325
 Such Blemishes, where rival Beauty reigns,
 If seen, she doubles; unobserv'd, she feigns.---

“ On these perhaps her drowsy Scandal turns.
 “ But say, when Jealousy, when Anger burns;
 “ Wak'd by strong Passions, will thy gentle Fair 230
 “ An Enemy's, a Rival's Virtue spare?”---
 Where Passions, raging with a Whirlwind's Force,
 Root Reason up in their impetuous Course;

'Midst such a Violence of Tempest tost,
 The gentle Cast of Character is lost. 335
 See first the troubled Scene of Madness o'er.
 You judge at random, if you judge before.
 Let cool Characteristic Scandal here,
 Unkindled by Revenge or Love, appear.

PAPIST OR PROTESTANT?---Alike each Name 340
 Now saves, now reprobates thy fleeting Fame.
 Say; CHURCHMAN OR DISSENTER? Answer, Knave;
 With half the Nation, let me damn or save.
 An honest Man and yet a WHIG?---Not so;
 Cries the loud Chorus of a Party. No; 345
 The Rogues have nothing else but Sense and Spirit:
 We, toasting TORIES, are the Men of Merit. ---
 A TORY, say the WHIGS, we learn'd at School,
 If honest, is at best an honest Fool.

While thus the Voice of Parties and of Sects, 350
 With bitter barefac'd Virulence, reflects:
 Is WOMAN guiltless of the common Cry?
 How should she; with a stern Dictator by?
 Be this her Praise; that often, where she can,
 She mollifies the great Traducer, MAN.--- 355

“ Save

“ Save in a LOVER’S or a POET’S Dream,
“ What else but DRESS or SCANDAL is her Theme?
“ Prithee what else should her Discourse admit,
“ Except low Trifles and the Trash of Wit?
“ Who well on FEMALE IGNORANCE reflect, 360
“ Will rarely Sense or Reasoning expect.”---

Too much her Particle of Air divine,
Yes, Custom and a jealous Sex confine.
In Search of Truths, which Learning’s Sons explore,
Her Education is forbid to soar, 365
No Classic School her docile Genius fires.
If such high Knowledge she by Stealth acquires;
The blushing lovely Stranger, unconfest,
Shines inward only to the Fair-one’s Breast.

Yet not for this, Accuser idly bent, 370
Must WOMANS’ Talk be needs in Trifles spent:
Since ev’n to MAN, debarr’d of Learning’s Source,
Wide Room remains for elegant Discourse.
Call, Muse (should this plain Truth be doubted) forth
The Subjects, human Happiness and Worth: 375
Forth to the Doubter’s Sight Religion call;
As the great Task, the proper Theme of all.

To say what REASON, Nature's Voice, instils;
 What Heav'n's high Page of REVELATION wills:---
 A boundless Space the lofty Subject fills.---

Let the vain Moralift, in Verfe or Profe, 381
 Himself Heaven's sole Interpreter fuppose;
 Sick of old Senfe, and panting to be new,
 Bid ev'ry Syftem but his own Adieu.
 Let each Difciple of each various School, 385
 With Scorn, confider each diffenting Fool.
 In one wild Error let them all agree;
 That only fuch as fee by Syftem fee.

Seldom with thefe the Voice of Virtue dwells.
 In other Notes her Angel-diftion fwells. 390
 Far from the Metaphyfical Maze of Art,
 She chufes her beft Oracle, the Heart.
 From thence, diftinguifhed by their native Glow,
 Her unaffected golden Precepts flow.

Zealous for VIRTUE, by RELIGION fir'd, 395
 With fweet BENEVOLENCE, ye Fair, inspir'd;
 Dwell on the facred Theme: ufe ev'ry Charm
 Our Breafte with moral Sentiments to warm.
 In the cold lifelefs Teacher Zeal infufe;
 And ev'ry PULPIT fire, and ev'ry MUSE. 400

A R G U M E N T.

The Subject Erudition. *Men over-rate this. Their vain-boasting a rich Field for Satire and Ridicule. Inscription of the Canto. The Works of Nature a sublime Study; to be pursued with Humility, from a laudable Motive. Reflections on the fixed Stars; and on the Solar System. Our Knowledge even of the latter extremely limited. How blind our Conjectures; exemplified in the Moon. Experimental Philosophy, the sole well-grounded System: first introduc'd by Lord Bacon. Many great Improvements since made: many Qualities of Matter, many Causes and Effects discovered: but the Causes inexplicable, and the Manner of their Operation hid. Instances: Newton's noble Principle of universal Attraction; his admirable Doctrine of Light; the Mystery of Vision, the Circulation of the Blood, the wonderful Instinct of Brutes: all necessarily resolved into the Will of Heaven. A short Hymn to the Creator His Works, as far as designed to be known here, not obscure; but obvious to the Search and Comprehension of all. The Study recommended to the fair Sex, with an important Caution.---Greece and Rome the Source and Standard of Wit. Their consummate Originals successfully imitated by few: the Reason. Verbal Criticism, and the Merit of Bentley reduced to their proper Value What the great Motive for studying the Classics should be. Women capable of the Task. As Examples to prove this, Lady Jane Grey, Queen Elizabeth, Madam Dacier, quoted. Justice done to the Genius of Leapor. A particular Set of Witlings. The Progress of Gothicism. Learning misapplied. An immense and original Subject for Satire necessarily waved now; but strongly pointed at in the Conclusion.*



THE
SCALE, &c.
CANTO V.

BOLD, unabash'd, the Boaster plumes his Crest.
See the SCALE groans, with ERUDITION prest.
Vain of his Knowledge, he defies the Fair:
“ And now the Balance, saucy Poet, spare.
“ For Man great Nature spreads her spangled Skies ; 5
“ Pleas'd to be view'd with philosophic Eyes.
“ Earth, Air, and Sea, disclose their Maker's Plan,
“ His Works and Wonders to the Search of MAN.
“ On him wise ROME and wiser GREECE bestow
“ Their Treasures, which in sacred Channels flow ; 10
“ Deep Channels, kindly from the weaker Sight
“ Of WOMAN veil'd in an eternal Night.”---

How

How fair, how tempting is the spacious Field,
Which letter'd Fools to Mirth and Censure yield !
A virgin Theme ; for solemn Satire fit ; 15
For lively Ridicule ; for laughing Wit :
Such Wit as plays about the conscious Heart,
When the gay guilty Readers smile and smart.

My MUSE, why start ? Why dread the Subject here ?
If, faint and breathless in the long Career, 20
Thou fondly wish to see thy Labour end ;
Up and the Bow for nimble Action bend.
At Random, as the Scenes of Folly lie,
With sudden Aim, bid the swift Arrow fly :
Or, singling now what suits thy Purpose best, 25
To future Indignation leave the rest.---

In the last Labour of my Muse what Name
Shall patronize her Hopes of future Fame ?
Wilt thou, sprung from the noble Root of BOYLE,
Smile gracious on my last, my greatest Toil ? 30
O, rich in all the native Worth of Blood,
Smile, H----N, supremely fair and good.
Should thine, should G----BY's Voice approve my Lays,
Distant Posterity begins to praise :

Canto 5. The SCALE. 73

My ravish'd Soul anticipates Renown ; 35
Regardless of the puny Nibler's Frown.
While BROWNE, while ETON's classic Sons commend,
If H----N her high Protection lend ;
The SCALE, above the Reach of Envy born,
Already triumphs o'er the Witling's Scorn.---- 40

Who study Nature's Works on Reason's Plan,
To benefit, with useful Knowledge, Man ;
Who, not deceiv'd by Names and pompous Sounds,
Of human Science mark the narrow Bounds ;
Who the great Maker's Wisdom humbly trace, 45
And hymn his Glory, with a cover'd Face :
Such Men like NEWTON, BOYLE, MACLAURIN, shine ;
Noble their Motive, and their Art divine.
But he who, fir'd by the sole Lust of Praise,
Amidst the Stars, with boastful Pinion, strays ; 50
While the low-dazled Dupe of Tinsel Wares,
A giddy Rabble eyes his Flight and stares ;
The blind, yet bold, Invader of the Skies
Provokes the Laughter of the truly wise.

Heav'n's sumless Host, which twinkles, scarcely seen, 55
Has long the Sport of vain Conjectures been :

Ev'n of the Solar Universe below

Alas! What know we? What expect to know?

Says Man: "I mark the PLANETS, as they move;

" Their Size can measure, and their Distance prove. 60

" I mark how round their Centre fix'd, the Sun,

" Some, by their little Moons attended, run.

" I mark the complex Motions of their Train;

" Their Revolutions mark, and Year explain.

" COMETS, which lawless were esteem'd, unknown, 65

" We now for Parts of the same System own;

" Perhaps to feed the solar Fire design'd.

" I would their Orbits and their Æra's find.

" This, half-discovered, claims my second Care:

" For chief the PLANETS my great Province are. 70

" Not made in vain:---they must be peopled too."---

Peopled?---" Yes, peopled."---Say; the People, who?---

Forbear, presumptuous Man, forbear to guess.

They must, or may be peopled, we confess.

Hold this Opinion, Reason bids thee, fast: 75

But let thy first Reflection be the last.

" In Time who knows what Observations new"---

Vain Hopes! The MOON, our nearest Neighbour, view.

From her high Mountains see the Shadows fall.

What Signs of Life and Culture?---None at all. 80

Nor

Nor Sea, to prove Conjecture wholly blind,
Nor Symptoms of an Atmosphere we find.

On a broad Basis, built by Nature's Hands,
Experimental Knowledge firmly stands.
First how to judge of Nature's hidden Law, 85
Great VERULAM, the Sage of BRITAIN, saw.
Plain seems the Tract, yet lay from human Sight }
Conceal'd, for Ages, in the Womb of Night ; }
'Till VERULAM arose and scatter'd Light. }
Men since, for BOYLE and NEWTON copy'd him, 90
Quitting the visionary Paths of Whim,
From solid Observations Truth explore.
All was but wild Hypothesis before.

Yes, much of Nature's Wisdom, Works and Ways
Has been discover'd in these latter Days. 95
Of Air, Fire, Water, Earth, maturely try'd,
Are many mystic Qualities descry'd.
That from such Causes such Effects will flow,
Plain we perceive ; but not the Manner how.

Eager in one great solid Mass to meet, 100
Lo sluggish Matter stirs, with magic Feet.

By this inexplicable Biass bound,
 The rapid Spheres, as NEWTON nobly found,
 Roll, twist'd from the Line of Nature, round.
 Who shall this active Principle explain, 105
 Which the least Atom feels? All Search is vain.
 Haste, proud Interpreter of Motion's Laws,
 Into the WILL of HEAV'N resolve the Cause.

Say, LIGHT, whence art thou? Whence æthereal Beam,
 Issues thy pure, thine all-involving Stream? 110
 Art thou before the Sun created, say;
 First call'd from Nothing, lovely Source of Day?
 If so; thy subtile Being, what? And where
 Extend, O Light, the Limits of thy Sphere?
 As Matter, art thou circumscrib'd by Place; 115
 Or infinite as the wide Womb of Space?
 In Darkness does thy dormant Fluid rest,
 Except when Motion is by Fire imprest;
 That Nature's Forms to the capacious Eye
 May, sweep'd by rapid Undulations, fly? 120

But see the SUN a mingled Lustre darts.
 His motley Beams the Prism of NEWTON parts.
 With Tinge, resembling Heav'n's refulgent Bow,
 See, separated by Refraction, glow

Canto 5. The S C A L E.

77

Seven various Hues, in splendid Order set ; 125
Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple, Violet.

Thus Light, it seems, is but a colour'd Flame,
Which Fire emits: Sun, any Fire; the same.
Thus rapid Rays, 'reflected, to the View
Make Objects visible, and paint them too. 130
NEWTON, it more than seems: thou reason'st well.
Proceed; the mysteries of Vision tell.

Of EYES the Form, Make, Artifice divine,
Display'd in beautiful Description, shine
Well may this Master-piece of Matter raise 135
Our highest Wonder, and exhaust our Praise:
Since, human weak Conception at an End,
The more we know, the less we comprehend.

Light enters here, refracted at the Door ;
And fast converges, twice refracted more ; 140
Till in a Point of Space, with Form compleat,
Thousands of Images together meet,
Swift on the Nerve of Vision painted. There
Uncrowded floats a perfect Hemisphere.

To

To make so many thousands Forms perceiv'd, 145
What Cones of Rays by Millions are receiv'd ;
From ev'ry Part of ev'ry Surface seen ?
Rays which, at Will, in ev'ry Point convene.
Shift, as our Fancy leads, the Point of Light,
Fresh and fresh Cones keep pouring on your Sight : 150
Cones vary'd in their Size, as well as new ;
While the same Objects hover in the View.

Now tell me, Boasters ignorant and vain,
Who the deep Mysteries of Light explain ;
Can ye conceive, at such a narrow Gate 155
How such vast Floods of Matter penetrate ?
Harmless how these, met in their Focus, burn ?
Next whither they diverge, and whither turn ?
Mayhap, soon as they reach the mental Eye,
Quench'd in the Brain, the flaming Nothings die. 160

How sees, the Mind ? Sees Light ? Sees Matter, how ?
Be this the great decisive Question now.
By what strange Magic does the visual Ray
Excite the glorious sweet Sensation, say.---
Proud Talkers, hold : the needless Boast forbear. 165
Copy your wise, your modest Master here.

To

Canto 5. The S C A L E.

79

To mortal Man is no such Science given.
Like NEWTON, own the wondrous WILL of HEAVEN.

Advantag'd by the MICROSCOPE, our Sight
Calls Millions forth of Animals to Light 170
The Maker's Wisdom and his Pow'r on all
Imprest appear. For him no Subject small.
Not his chief Works alone with Wonder fill.
His least bear Proofs of an Almighty Skill.
Pregnant with Proofs, each animated Frame 175
Puts the bold babbling Infidel to Shame.

Naked and open to the Gazer's Eye
Life's Channels and the Springs of Nature lie.
Swell'd hugely by the Microscope, how plain,
See, the Blood circles in the lucid Vein! 180
Diffusing Nourishment in ev'ry Nook,
How the rich Rivulets mæander!--Look ;
Nay look, who the wild Paradox advance ;
Seems this the Finger, these the Works of Chance ?

Preservative of Life, if not the Source ; 185
Whence, CIRCULATION, comes thy mystic Course ?
Spring touches Spring, and Wheel by Wheel is prest :
But which the principal that moves the rest ?

Is

Is it the Wheel of Breath? All-knower, say.
 Then next; what prompts the busy Lungs to play? 190
 Vaunter, proceed: the Muse shall follow fast;
 And pin thee to the WILL of HEAV'N at last.

Check, human Reason, check thy boastful Pride.
 Thine' eyeless Sister seems a surer Guide;
 Fair Instinct, by the bounteous Hand of Heav'n 195
 To Beasts, where Reason glimmers scarcely, giv'n.
 All these their Task, the mighty Maker's Will,
 Inspir'd by this unerring Voice, fulfil.
 Urg'd by their Frame, they propagate their Kind,
 The Means of Shelter, and of Safety find; 200
 Seek, with undevious Appetite, their Good,
 And rush, at Sight, upon their proper Food.

Here blush, ye gross Blasphemers, who deny
 CREATION or a ruling DEITY.
 Mark how the SILK-WORM spins digested Leaves, 205
 Spins from her Bowels: how the SPIDER weaves.
 Observe the little ANT, by Nature's Law,
 Provide for Seasons which he never saw.
 Observe, O wilful and averse to see,
 The small, the subtle, the laborious BEE. 210

Canto 5. The S C A L E.

81

In mathematic Cells, preserv'd for Use,
View the rich Stores of his nectareous Juice.
Let such as still another Proof require,
Come and the feather'd Architects admire;
Whose Instinct mocks slow Reason's tedious School, 215
Who, taught by Nature, build without a Rule.
An inborn Skill, which far surpasses Art,
What else but HEAV'N and PROVIDENCE impart?

Of this strange Wisdom in the brutal Race,
Which mimics Reason, and supplies her Place, 220
Proportion'd to the Wants of ev'ry Tribe;
Canst thou the Manner and the Wheels describe?
Vain Judge of Nature, no. See, bashful, here
Once more the secret Hand of HEAV'N appear.

Wise are thy Works, ALMIGHTY MAKER ;---wise, 225
Ev'n thus while dimly view'd by mortal Eyes.
O for an ANGEL's comprehensive Sight!
What must they seem in a meridian Light!
In the pure SAINT what blissful Wonder raise!
How charm, how prompt his pious Heart to Praise! 230
Sweet Hope in this imperfect State below,
Where HEAV'N just kindles our Desire to know!

M

Puzzled

Puzzled in Mazes, by Conjecture led,
 And with fair Truth, in broken Glimpses, fed; 234
 Shall we not see the great CREATION plain
 At last, when loos'd from this corporeal Chain?
 Or has HEAV'N wak'd the glorious Thirst in vain?

As far as NATURE wills them to be scann'd,
 The Ways, the Wonders of her skilful Hand
 Are not obscure; nor to the letter'd Head 240
 Alone perspicuous. He that runs may read.
 Disclos'd, as Truth and Reason's Voice require,
 Forth blaze at once her Characters of Fire;
 Beneath no metaphysic Cloud conceal'd,
 But fair ev'n to the FEMALE EYE reveal'd; 245
 More too for FEMALE OBSERVATION fit
 Than the gay fashionable Page of WIT.

Rouze, WOMAN, and assert the noble Claim.
 Be NATURE'S Works, her obvious Works thy Theme
 Of Wonder and of Praise: but wisely there 250
 The Bounds, which NATURE has prescrib'd, revere.
 Seek not her many Mysteries to scan;
 Nor rashly sift the great CREATOR'S Plan:
 Leave that Presumption to conceited MAN.

Canto 5. The S C A L E. 83

Let him, amidst the Dreams of School-men tost, 255
In a long Labyrinth of Words be lost.---

Rich is thy Treasure, ROME ; and richer, thine,
Mother of Science and of Arts divine,
Immortal GREECE. Hail, GREECE. Hail mighty ROME.
O come, inspire me with your Wisdom ; come. 260
Should my Pen please Posterity ; to you
The first fair Tribute of my Thanks is due.
Your noble Page, as Nature dictates, writ,
Is the great Standard and the Source of Wit.
Men since, for Taste, Style, Sentiment, admir'd ; 265
Form'd by your Precepts, by your Models fir'd,
Learn thence with true Propriety to please ;
Thence draw the Charm of Elegance and Ease.

Not many such have yet arisen. Few
Keep close your great Originals in View. 270
Few see their Genius in a proper Light :
How therefore point their Imitation right ?
A L---N, a B----KE, a BR----NE
With your's mix Sterling Merit of their own.
Yes, classic Beauties, boldly borrow'd, they, 275
Like DRYDEN, oft with Usury repay.

But seldom such appear. The scribbling Rest
Are heavy clumsy Borrowers at best.
GREECE, ROME and FRANCE they mingle at a Meal ;
And ev'ry Thing, except their SPIRIT, steal. 280

In Classic Knowledge who the first ?---Say, Fool,
High-flush'd with Grammar ; vain of LILLY's Rule.
" BENTLEY, while living, was the first."----Absurd,
To name the Critic of a Phrase or Word.
Your boasted BENTLEY claims some Merit: True. 285
Let the sagacious Piddler have his Due.
Greatly distinguish'd in his narrow Sphere ;
Crown him, yes, crown him with the Laurel there :
Nor vainly raise him higher. What Pretence ?
LANGUAGE is but the Vehicle of SENSE. 290

Ye who with BENTLEY's low Ambition burn ;
Heedless of Thought, who verbal Critics turn ;
Who but for that the noble ANCIENTS read,
Blind to the Profit of the Heart and Head :
Say, lost to Shame, to Sense and Virtue lost, 295
Triflers, is this the Subject of your Boast ?
And shall ye triumph over WOMEN so,
By FRIBBLE ERUDITION ? Vaunters, no.

Such,

Such, the few such as know the Classics well,
On the sweet Page, from other Motives, dwell. 300
While LANGUAGE claims their nice Attention too ;
Sublimier Objects are the first in View :
SENSE, SPIRIT, NATURE, VIRTUE's moral Food ;
All the great Science of the wise and good.

Cease to pronounce, rash Judge of WOMAN's Wit, 305
Her Genius for the noble Task unfit.
Illustrious GREY, divine ELIZA prove
That WOMEN were not solely made for Love.
These, the first Wonder of a polish'd Age,
Were deeply vers'd in the SOCRATIC Page. 310
To these was God-like ARISTOTLE known ;
And TULLY, the great TULLY, was their own.

While royal Favours on each Muse's Head
A LEWIS, greater than AUGUSTUS, shed ;
While FRANCE, too martial for such golden Days, 315
Mix'd guilty Laurels with APOLLO's Bays :
Rebels to Sense, her half-learn'd Critics rose ;
Fools! to the sacred Sense of Ages Foes ;
Who durst, with impious Obloquy, blaspheme
The classic Heroes of immortal Fame. 320

Not

Not HOMER's Self escap'd their Witling Rage;
 Nor great DEMOSTHENES, nor PLATO's Page.
 A sudden Vengeance of the daring Crew
 DACIER to take, indignant DACIER flew.
 FRANCE, EUROPE listen'd, while a WOMAN's Pen 325
 Rebuk'd and sham'd the vicious Taste of MEN.

Had humble LEAPOR been like DACIER bred;
 If her high Genius, to the Fountain led,
 Had learn'd the pure Castalian Streams to know,
 As richly these in classic Channels flow : 330
 Would HEAV'N, propitious to BRITANNIA's Praise,
 Have granted this, and added Length of Days;
 The present Age had triumph'd o'er the last,
 And FRANCE had been in FEMALE-WIT surpast.
 Ev'n now, while an untutor'd Genius swells, 335
 What Strength, what Music in the Numbers dwells?
 How sweet the Note while, pois'd on Shakespear Wings,
 This conscious Child of Nature soars and sings.

Shall here a Race of prattling Fools escape,
 In Talk, not Print, who DACIER's Witlings ape? 340
 Who, lamely vers'd in CLASSIC-KNOWLEDGE, find
 An ERUDITION of a cheaper Kind?

FRANCE now with both, in their Opinion, vies,
 Both GREECE and ROME ; and well their Place supplies.
 Has FRANCE subdu'd our Intellects, our Fame ; 345
 Nor yet with Arms?---Blush, BRITAIN, at the Name
 Of Sons who, Slaves in their Esteem, advance
 This strange un-ENGLISH Compliment to FRANCE.

With rapid Foot and shameless Forehead, here
 Foul GOTHICISM comes. Too plain appear 350
 Marks of the Monster's desolating Hand.
 Sense fails, and Folly re-assumes the Land.
 Now sick of Truths which glare, too grossly right,
 Asham'd and sick of Reason's common Light,
 Men chuse for bold Absurdities to fight. }
 Join, WOMEN ; read and rise in the Defence 356
 Of drooping TASTE and violated SENSE :
 HALF-WITS and frothy PEDANTS to chastise,
 Rise into DACIERS, into LEAPORS rise.

LEARNING, except where SENSE and VIRTUE guide, 360
 Serves but to swell that empty Bubble, Pride.
 Unsheath'd a thousand literary Swords ;
 What follows?---Railing and a War of Words.
 No Zeal for Truth affects the Wrangler's Will.
 His sole Ambition is to prove his Skill
 Against his Brother Blockheads of the Quill.

}
 Whole

Whole Fields of SATIRE, rich, untrodden, new, 367
 Start to my Pen, and rush upon my View.
 But wisely wave them, MUSE ; and, sick of Rhime,
 Untouch'd reserve them for a fitter Time : 370
 Should ought, by WITLINGS utter'd, in their Gall,
 Provoke thy Vengeance and for SATIRE call.
 Here much too far the Subject would extend.
 Then pause, my MUSE ; or see the wish'd-for End.---

F I N I S.

